



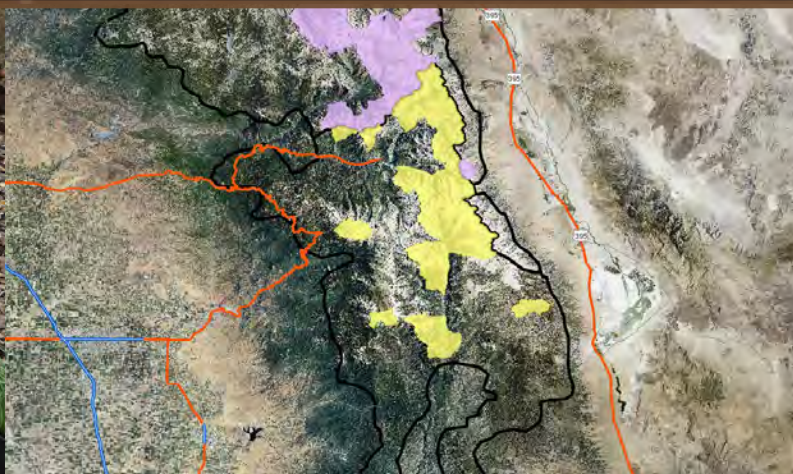
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office

Serving the people by conserving fish, wildlife and plants in California



2014 Accomplishments Report



The Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office has a long and proud tradition of using science, partnership and innovation in the service of conservation.

It has been a year of change for our office and we've experienced challenge and triumph. We've been successful as a team as we worked through the office realignment, different staffing, budget realities, and new conservation priorities.

Our momentum is growing!

This compilation of our accomplishments highlights just a portion of our office's personal and professional successes in 2014. I believe our accomplishments demonstrate that our tradition of using science, partnerships and innovation for conservation is alive and strong.

I'm proud to be part of this team. I respect the work that you do and what it means for the future. Thank you for your outstanding service!

Jennifer M. Norris



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Administration and Organizational Highlights

Budget and Files

We closed out the budget within 2%, hired a new budget chief and submitted 8 Natural Resource Damage Assessment packages for a total of \$492,000. We sent 236 file boxes to the San Bruno National Records Center in 2014 and for the first time ever have open contingency files there.

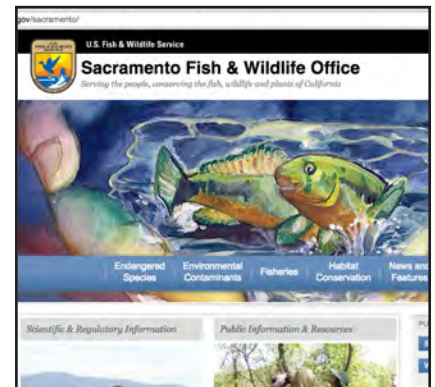


GIS Service Expanded & Species Monitoring

We extended GIS support services to other offices, worked to revise jurisdictional maps after realignment and provided training to Service biologists across 9 states. Electronic filing of species monitoring reports were completed, enabling us to access and utilize scientific information on species surveys over time.

Website, Internet Tools and Social Media

The SFWO website experienced a high volume of public interest in 2014. It was accessed 97,029 times by 59,906 users who viewed 214,781 pages and 40.4% of users came back for more! Our Twitter network increased by over 300%. Web accessible base data maps for NRDA and customized GIS web applications for individual projects like the Santa Rosa Plain Recovery Plan were developed as well.



Recycling and Donations

The SFWO Recycling Committee collected 67.3 lb of aluminum, 172.8 lb of plastic, and 158.5 lb of glass and donated the proceeds to purchase gifts for 50 kids, 15 seniors, and 15 disabled adults through Gifts from the Heart. We also donated \$87K+ in computer equipment and 200 used binders to local schools.

Three Sierra Amphibians

In 2014 the Service listed the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and the Mountain yellow-legged frog as endangered and the Yosemite Toad as threatened. SFWO led this effort that resulted from over a decade of research and long standing partnerships with 9 National Forests, Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Native to California these species are threatened by habitat degradation, predation, and climate change.



We succeeded as a result of our sound science, extensive outreach and interagency cooperation.

Our **Recovery Division** worked quickly after the final listing rule to issue recovery permits to prevent interruption of ongoing research.



Our **GIS Division** created spatial maps for the proposed critical habitat rule and public outreach maps for each county and federal land area. GIS used new web-based technology and greatly enhanced federal coordination efforts.



Our **External Affairs Program** disseminated information to 17 counties, 9 Congressional districts, participated in 3 Congressional forums, held 5 public meetings and 2 public hearings, and responded to 2 FOIA requests. We prepared and shared information with 3 other field offices, 3 agency partners, and local County Boards of Supervisors. Over 50 news articles were published.



Our **Endangered Species Program** drafted one of the 1st joint proposed listing and critical habitat proposals. There were five open comment periods and over 20,000 public comments. Listing was finalized and final critical habitat is expected in 2015. Staff worked closely with economists to publish a draft economic analysis and worked with the Forest Service to finalize a programmatic biological opinion to streamline ESA compliance for 1,500 projects on national forest lands.

SFWO established new precedents while protecting three Sierra amphibians:

- Setting standards for new policy to coordinate with federal agencies prior to proposed critical habitat publication.
- Proposed critical habitat maps were shared via GIS supported teleconferences with our federal partners in advance of draft publication.

Santa Rosa Plain Recovery Plan

The culmination of many years of hard work to develop the Conservation Strategy for Santa Rosa Plain, this draft recovery plan will help the endangered California tiger salamander, Sonoma DPS, and three endangered plants: Sonoma sunshine, Burke's goldfields, and Sebastopol meadowfoam.

This plan was developed by the Service, CDFW, Army Corps, EPA, Regional Water Quality Control Board, species experts, as well as local jurisdictions, interest groups, and community representatives.



Maricopa Solar HCP

Our first HCP for solar development, covering activities from construction to decommissioning of a solar complex, this HCP will help the endangered San Joaquin kit fox, Tipton kangaroo rat, blunt-nosed leopard lizard and 2 unlisted sensitive species: Nelson's antelope squirrel and burrowing owl.

Once completed, it preserves almost 5,700 acres of species habitat and natural lands in Kern County.

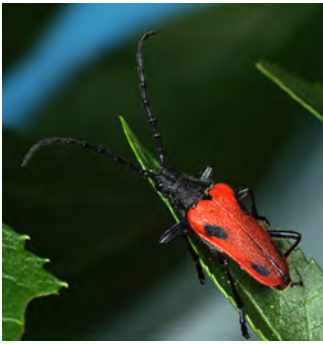
Suisun Marsh Management Plan

This 30-year plan to restore and enhance Suisun Marsh, a critical part of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta estuary ecosystem, was completed in 2014 to address concerns over use of resources within the largest contiguous brackish marsh on the West Coast.

Home to many listed species such as the salt marsh harvest mouse, Suisun thistle and an important area for migratory birds, the plan creates a framework for a broad partnership to restore 5,000 to 7,000 acres of marsh and tidal wetlands and enhance and protect more than 40,000 acres of managed wetlands.



Species Surveys Completed



Completed Valley elderberry long-horned surveys at several Army Corps of Engineers' mitigation sites.



Assisted with CA tiger salamander surveys adjacent to the MOTCO site and completed larval surveys in the Santa Rosa Plain.



Assisted with CA red-legged frog surveys within the Kaiser Creek watershed.



Completed surveys to detect nesting raptors at sites along the American River.

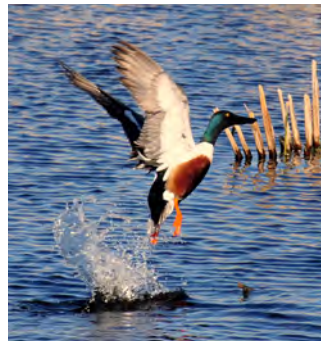
Contaminants Investigations Progress



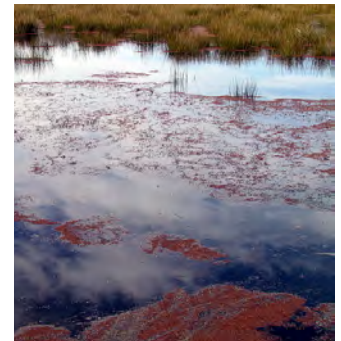
Data from a multi-year joint SFWO and CDFW study on rodenticides in San Joaquin kit fox supported last years decision to restrict Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides in California.



Laboratory work by UC Davis was completed on fungal pathogen, pesticides, and temperature impacts on the Cascades frog in the mountains of Northern California.



The report on a multi-million dollar study completed with USGS on mercury effects on Bay/Delta Birds will assist managers in developing wetland restoration plans to minimize methylmercury production.



Data analysis was completed on increased Azolla growth in the Butte Sink to help identify what was causing the problem. Most notable was the consistent presence of the fungicide azoxystrobin.

Special Projects



Funding from the Cosco Busan Oil Spill Settlement has helped Richardson Bay Audubon improve bird habitat on Aramburu Island. In spring 2014, the island confirmed nesting and successful fledging of a Black oystercatcher, the first confirmed record for this species in Richardson Bay.



Partnered with DWR to develop the Small Erosion Repair Program pilot study that will provide a streamlined process to identify, obtain regulatory authorization for, and construct small levee repairs on about 300 miles in the Sacramento River Flood control Project area.

Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

The effort to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species in 2014 was the single largest conservation action accomplished by the SFWO in terms of geographical scale, interagency partnership, and outreach coordination.

Extensive Public Outreach was Supported by Admin and GIS Divisions and Coordinated with:

12 States



25 Tribes



4 Regions



7 Agencies



100 Members of Congress

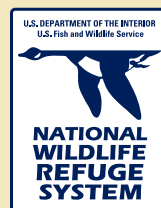


Current Occupied Range

This effort extended to 40 counties, produced 80+ maps and led to more than 100 news stories.

During the 5 open comment periods over 98,000 comments were received.

The SFWO worked with many federal partners to ensure federal agency coordination was consistent before and after the proposed rules were published.



Habitat Conserved, Species Protected

- A total of 476 consultations were completed in 2014: 67 formal biological opinions; 91 informal consultations and 318 technical assistance consultations.
- Nearly 2,800 acres of habitat were purchased for San Joaquin kit fox, California tiger salamander, and California red-legged frog and will be included in the East Contra Costa HCP preserve system.
- Grazing practices were improved on the approximately 3,000 acre Etchelet property acquired as mitigation for the expansion of the Los Vaqueros Reservoir. It supports the only remaining naturally occurring population of large-flowered fiddleneck currently known to exist.
- Preserved 41 acres of habitat for the Alameda whipsnake, the Central California tiger salamander, and the California red-legged frog in Alameda County with the Sunol Valley Aggregate Quarry expansion.



- Preserved 386 acres of core scrub habitat for the Alameda whipsnake and completed a long-term management plan that covers 75% of the entire range of the pallid manzanita as part of the FEMA East Bay Hills Fire Hazard Risk Reduction Project.
- Modified the San Francisquito Creek Flood Control Project to avoid flooding one of the largest populations of endangered California Ridgway's rail rangewide at the Faber Marsh in East Palo Alto, San Mateo County.
- Co-authored a grant and received a \$2 million in Federal matching funds for the acquisition of 1,831 acres of habitat at the UTC Property on Coyote Ridge in Santa Clara County.
- Protected nearly a fifth of the remaining undeveloped serpentine grassland habitat in Santa Clara County.
- Negotiated to ensure permanent protection of the nearly 19,000 acre Los Vaqueros Watershed.

Conservation Banking

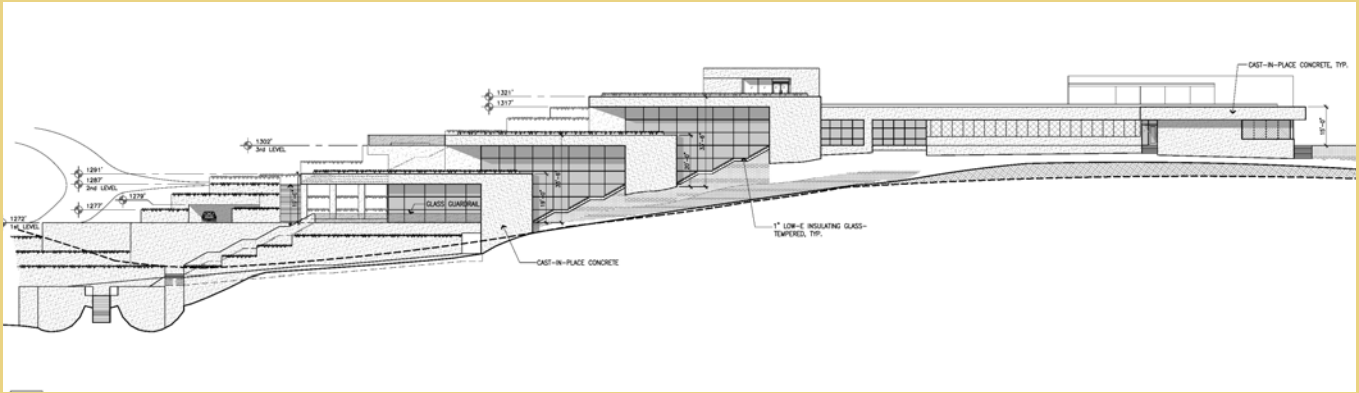
- Colusa Mitigation Bank was signed – a 163 acre bank located in Colusa County that is for the giant garter snake.
- The SMUD Nature Preserve Bank was signed – a 1,132 acre bank in Sacramento county established for vernal pool fairy and tadpole shrimp; CA tiger salamander; and Sacramento Orcutt grass.
- Monitoring from the Sutter Basin GGS Conservation Bank reported twice as many snakes in 2014 as it had in 2012. Advanced planning for drought conditions where aquatic species were involved paid off.



Programmatic Biological Opinions

- Two programmatic BOs with the Army Corps were completed: one for the California red-legged frog and another for the Central California tiger salamander.
- A 15-year management plan for 22,000 acres of tidal marsh habitat for migratory birds, the salt marsh harvest mouse and California Ridgway's rail at the San Pablo Bay NWR.
- The Folsom Specific Plan Area, which covers 3,510 acres with 1.805 acres of effects to vernal pool crustacean habitat.
- The PG&E Transmission Separation project re-initiation traverses two National Forests and spans over 9 counties in Northern California.
- The BLM Bakersfield Resource Management Plan addressing management of 400,000 acres of surface lands and 1.2 million acres of mineral estate in 10 counties and covers 17 species of plants and 26 species of animals.





Recovering Species with the Help of the Coming Saratoga Center

We are working closely with the Peninsula Humane Society and the Lawrence Ellison Foundation in the planning and operation of the Conservation Center for Wildlife Care in the town of Saratoga. Known as the Saratoga Center, it will include a cutting-edge imperiled species captive breeding facility for reptiles, amphibians, butterflies, and terrestrial invertebrates. The facility will have quarantine rooms, breeding rooms and a hibernation room. It will also have an endowment to support the science needed to improve breeding success as time goes on. The project is entirely funded by the Lawrence Ellison Foundation and includes the Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and leading scientists.



Secretary of the Interior Visits Contra Costa HCP

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell met with community leaders and experts from around the state to discuss the importance of partnerships between the government and other stakeholders to conserve endangered species while supporting smart economic development. She also toured the East Contra Costa County HCP, which covers nearly 175,000 acres and helps conserve 28 imperiled species.

Youth Engagement



Over 1,100 students planted nearly 2,200 plants in Schoolyard Habitat gardens at 5 schools in 2014. Eighty teachers trained in SYH, Pollinators or outdoor curriculum to lead efforts in coming years.



Partnered with California Conservation Corps, Cristo Rey H.S. and the SLEWS program to teach over 50 high school and college age youth about the work of the Service.



Spoke at Grant High School's GEO Environmental Science and Design Academy about the Service's mission, the career path that the presenting employee followed to obtain their current position, and how Grant High students can obtain a career with us.



Helped lead the discussion circles at BLM's "Youth Summit" at Sacramento State University. This career fair introduced elementary and high school students to potential careers working in the outdoors.

Partner Engagement



Presented at a training for Army Corps of Engineers' employees throughout the U.S. on how we collaborate on projects that involve water or watersheds and the regulations we implement.



Addressed an Army Corps of Engineers' Planner Course on the role of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Civil Works Planning.